

WISCONSIN SMALL BUSINESS TAKES FIRST STEP TOWARDS
INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

ABOUT COATING TECH SLOT DIES, LLC. Coating Tech Slot Dies (CTSD) designs and manufactures custom dies used in the application of liquid coatings. Extremely precise, these dies are integral to the production of lithium ion batteries; optical films for televisions, computer screens, iPhones and iPads, water filtration systems, adhesive tapes, and many other products. Established in 2012, CTSD has approximately 20 employees. The company offers process consulting, coating trials, and equipment refurbishment, as well as specialized training programs in slot die coating technology.

THE CHALLENGE. Co-owners Mark Miller and Tim Marion were aware of the potential for CTSD to serve markets in China, Korea, and Japan. "We knew that 80 percent of our sales would eventually be outside the U.S.," recalls Miller, "but we had so many questions. How to ship? How to get paid internationally? It was all new to us."

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. To find answers, Miller applied for the ExporTech™ program offered by the University of Wisconsin-Stout Manufacturing Outreach Center (MOC), a NIST MEP affiliate, and its partners. ExporTech™ is a national initiative to help small to mid-size manufacturers step out of their comfort zones and grow through exporting at an accelerated pace.

During three full-day sessions over a three-month period, international business experts provided critical information, resources, and tools to support Coating Tech Slot Dies as the company established viable target markets and built a refined exporting plan. Topics included international banking, freight forwarding, government regulation, and export strategy and best practices. John Konkell, an international business executive with 35 years of experience, served as the coach to support CTSD's development of a strategic export plan. "In the U.S.," Konkell observed, "a lot of companies don't know how to take that first step. They don't know the services that are available to them. It's an exciting part of U.S. commerce to have small companies from Wisconsin do well."

CTSD is adding new positions to carry out its export strategy. With the help of international agents, the company expects to be exporting products to new international markets in a few short years.

"I'd recommend that business owners definitely get involved with ExporTech™ before they do the guesswork on their own. Going back to fix problems is harder than starting out with the right answers and moving forward."

-Mark Miller, Co-Owner, Coating Tech Slot Dies

RESULTS



Added **7** jobs



Exporting products to **4** new markets within 3 years



Increased international agents from zero to **2**

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